

DRAFT Social Value Policy

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1. Purpose and vision

In Brent our vision is to help everyone here live their best lives. Moving Forward Together is the overarching borough plan for Brent and sets out the shared priorities and ambitions that guide everything we do towards improving the lives of those who live in the borough and leaving no one behind.

Social value is an important way in which the Council, working closely with partners, businesses, and communities, can achieve our aims for the borough. It is a mechanism through which we can ensure that every pound spent and every decision made delivers wider community benefit.

This policy reflects our commitment to putting residents first in all we do and to generate social value that not only creates positive and measurable benefits but also delivers lasting impact for everyone in Brent. It sets out Brent Council's commitment to embedding social value across all areas of our work. Our aim is to shift from a narrow, procurement-only focus to a whole-council, place-based approach that delivers meaningful outcomes for our residents and communities.

2. Our definition of Social Value

In Brent, social value is about transforming communities and creating positive lasting impact for Brent's people and places through the way we work, spend, lead and collaborate – above and beyond the core purpose of a service or contract. These benefits are outcome-based and focused on real change rather than just numbers; what matters is how they improve people's lives. They may include, but are not limited to, creating jobs and training opportunities, supporting local businesses and community organisations, and improving our environment. They can be delivered through procurement, employment practices, grants, investments, or other council and borough-wide processes.

Social value is about using our resources (financial, physical, and relational¹) to create positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes beyond the core function of a service or contract. It aligns with Brent's Borough Plan, Community Wealth Building and Radical Place Leadership ambitions, and its role as a local anchor institution.

Equally, this policy recognises and celebrates the social value already being delivered by local voluntary, community, social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and care providers through the work they do every day. These organisations often deliver deep and sustained community impact, rooted in local relationships and trust. Our aim is to better acknowledge, support, and measure this existing value, and to ensure our policies and processes enable rather than

¹ Relational resources are the networks, partnerships, and connections we build with people and organisations.

disadvantage smaller organisations that contribute so significantly to Brent's social, economic, and environmental wellbeing.

3. Local and national policy context

The National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS), released alongside the Procurement Act 2023 in February 2025, makes social value a core priority in public procurement.

4. Scope of the policy

This policy aims to maximise the positive impact of social value in Brent by:

- Specifying the Council's social value requirements and priorities
- Guiding suppliers, partners, and officers on our social value approaches and ambitions
- Describing how the Council will deliver and measure social value outcomes

This policy applies to:

- The Council's commissioning of goods, services, and works
- The Council's own operations, including our in-house services and employment practices
- The Council's wider work and influence with partners locally and nationally

5. Our Social Value approach

Our approach is to embed social value as a way of working across the Council. We have overarching priorities and guiding principles (outlined in this policy) that are adapted into bespoke models. This enables us to respond to the different social value needs and opportunities that are present in different services.

Brent Council is a major anchor institution in the borough; we employ over XX staff and work with over XX diverse suppliers. We collaborate with our partners, anchor institutions, several major developers, and the third sector to maximise the creation of social value across Brent. There are five main ways we do this:

- **Collaboration:** We align our approaches to regional Local Authorities and partners and share good practice in forums such as Social Value Network or Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network
- **Brokerage:** We use our position to broker cross-sector partnerships that connect social value opportunities into the right places. We use tools like Match My Project to connect suppliers with community-led initiatives, and the Social Progress Index to identify local priorities, ensuring that social value is delivered where it's needed most

- **Purpose-driven tendering:** We maintain an active awareness of local suppliers and markets and monitor the diversity of our supply chains. We strive to make our tendering processes as accessible as possible, particularly to small-medium enterprises and voluntary sector organisations
- **Inclusive economy:** We drive initiatives that aim to build an inclusive and social economy in Brent, and we work with partners to support local social economy organisations. This includes our work under the *Developing the VCSE Sector*, *Strategic Commissioning*, and *Community Wealth Building* strands of the *Capacity and Capability Building Programme*
- **Guidance:** We provide toolkits, support, and training to staff, suppliers, and the voluntary sector. This includes specific training and support to Council commissioners and contract managers

How we apply this approach in practice

This approach will be applied through a flexible delivery model. Requirements will be targeted, relevant and proportionate, reflecting both the nature and the value of the contract. Guidance will be available to help officers select the most appropriate method in each context. In practice this means:

- Using TOMs²-style, quantifiable outputs where appropriate (e.g. large infrastructure projects)
- Using co-designed, collaborative approaches³ for complex, place-based and relational work
- Applying tiered expectations based on contract value:

Contract value	Social value requirement
Under £215k	No formal SV weighting required, but inherent or existing social value (e.g. through local VCSEs, SMEs or community-based delivery) should be recognised and can inform evaluation where relevant.
£215k-£1m	Basic SV contribution in 1–2 priority areas
£1m-£5m	Clear SV commitments with agreed KPIs
Over £5m	Strategic SV across multiple outcomes, min. 3 KPIs

While not all contracts will carry a formal social value weighting, Brent Council recognises the inherent value created by smaller, local and community-based

² The [Social Value TOM](#) (Themes, Outcomes, Measures) System is a widely adopted framework for recording and reporting Social Value. The system (note: framework rather than system. Maybe mention that core TOMs are available on an open source basis, whereas the Portal has to be paid for) is structured around key Themes, within each are specific Outcomes that describe the targeted change or benefit an organisation wants to create through its activities and initiatives. The Measures then represent the quantifiable actions it takes.

³ [Social Value Toolkit - Cooperative Councils Innovation Network](#)

organisations and will take this into account in commissioning and evaluation processes.

6. Guiding Principles

These guiding principles underpin everything we do to create social value in Brent. They reflect our commitment to work in partnership with communities, to embed our values across all activities, and to make our approach proportionate and meaningful in every context.

Embed values

- Social value must be built into everything we do – from early design and commissioning to delivery and evaluation.
- It should be a shared responsibility across the Council and our partners, guided by senior leadership and built into day-to-day decisions.
- Our definition of value includes social, economic, and environmental wellbeing – and reflects our commitment to equality, inclusion, and sustainability.
- Wherever possible, social value should be co-designed with those it affects, ensuring that initiatives are not ‘added on’ but integral to service design and delivery.

Focus locally and be community-led

- Our approach is place-based and rooted in Brent’s communities.
- We prioritise initiatives that make a tangible difference to Brent’s people and neighbourhoods, recognising the strengths and assets already within our borough.
- Wherever possible, social value activities should be co-designed with communities and local voluntary sector partners, ensuring that residents shape priorities and delivery.
- We expect suppliers and partners to strengthen local ecosystems – supporting Brent-based SMEs, social enterprises, and VCSE organisations to thrive.

Be relevant and proportionate

- Social value should be ambitious but realistic.
- Expectations should be proportionate to the scale, type, and context of the activity or contract.
- Impact is maximised when actions are well targeted, relevant to local needs, and achievable within the available timeframe and resources.
- We encourage collaboration between suppliers, community partners and Council teams to avoid duplication and focus collective effort where it will have most effect.

Place at the heart

- Social value in Brent is fundamentally place-based.
- We seek outcomes that strengthen our borough as a whole – improving wellbeing, building community power, and creating inclusive local growth.
- We will use local data, including the Social Progress Index, to inform priorities and monitor impact at neighbourhood level.
- Wherever possible, we will design approaches that bring people together, foster belonging, and ensure every part of Brent benefits from social value activity.

7. Brent's Social Value priorities

Moving Forward Together (Brent's Borough Plan) sets out five strategic goals for the borough. In support of these goals, this policy identifies the following priority themes which provide the context for the areas in which Brent wishes to focus social value. These themes are shown below with examples of the sorts of activities and outputs the policy seeks to secure under each theme:



Core priorities

- Priority 1: Good jobs and fair work
- Priority 2: Inclusive economic growth and thriving local businesses
- Priority 3: Reducing inequalities and strengthening community wellbeing, resilience, and participation
- Priority 4: Environmental sustainability and climate action
- Priority 5: Building community and voluntary sector capacity

Guidance and updates

Brent's priorities will be set out in a live guidance document, updated regularly to reflect the most current strategic objectives, community aspirations, and policy context. This ensures colleagues always work with the most up-to-date priorities.

Delivering and measuring social value

We will take a flexible and proportionate approach to measuring social value, reflecting the different types of work we deliver. What matters most is that we can clearly demonstrate the difference our activity makes for Brent's people and places.

- For larger or more transactional contracts, we may use structured tools such as Brent-tailored TOMs to support consistency and benchmarking.
- For complex, place-based or community-led work, we will focus on collaborative and qualitative measures that capture lived experience and longer-term outcomes.

All social value commitments will be defined early and built into contracts so that expectations are clear from the start. Progress will be tracked through a mix of quantitative indicators and community feedback.

Each year, the Council will publish an Annual Social Value Impact Report summarising performance, learning and examples of good practice. This will inform continuous improvement and help shape future priorities.

Supporting guidance will be updated as needed to reflect new data, learning or legislation.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for embedding and delivering social value sits with Brent Council's Corporate Management Team and Cabinet, supported by the Senior Responsible Owner for Social Value. Strategic oversight will be provided through the Council's performance and governance structures, including regular reporting to the Commissioning, Procurement and Contract Management Assurance Board (CPCMAB), relevant committees, and senior leadership forums.

Detailed operational responsibilities and procedures will be set out separately in the Social Value Guidance, which will provide officers with practical support for implementation, monitoring and reporting.

9. Compliance and accountability

If a supplier is unable to meet their contractual social value obligations, this should be treated as a contract failure in the same way as any other. The first step would be a remedial plan, and if the issue continues it should be escalated through the defined contract governance structure.

10. Support and enablers

Effective delivery of this policy will be supported by:

- Staff training and role-specific guidance
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities for social value within the council and in contract management
- Supplier support and pre-market engagement to help suppliers, especially local SMEs and VCSEs, understand Brent's priorities and requirements.
- Tools and resources, including:
 - Brent TOMs framework
 - [Social Progress Index](#)
 - Match My Project platform
 - Social Value Guidance document

Social Value Guidance

A detailed Social Value Guidance will be co-produced with officers, suppliers, and community representatives to support the delivery of this policy.